

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
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ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO, OCON, AORG

SUBJECT: FAO CONFERENCE: POST-HARVEST LOSSES

REFS: (A) ROME 18540 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 225339,
(C) STATE 213883, (D) ROME 18430 (NOTAL), (E) BONN 18008
(NOTAL), (F) TOKYO 15629 (NOTAL)

1. AS ACTION ADDRESSEES ARE AWARE, FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL
SAOUMA IS PROPOSING A PROGRAM TO REDUCE POST-HARVEST
LOSSES (PHL) WHICH WE STRONGLY SUPPORT (REFS B AND C).
UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THE DG IS ATTEMPTING TO FUND
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THIS PROGRAM IN A MANNER TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO OURSELVES
AND CONGRESS.

2. OUR OBJECTIVE IS AN EFFECTIVE, QUICK-STARTING PHL
PROGRAM FUNDED IN AN ACCEPTABLE MANNER. THE ISSUE WILL
NOW COME UP FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE FAO CONFERENCE.
DISCUSSIONS PRECEDING AND DURING THE RECENT FAO COUNCIL

MEETING HAVE REVEALED SLIGHTLY GREATER FLEXIBILITY ON SAOUMA'S PART AND THERE IS HOPE THAT THE MATTER CAN NOW SUCCESSFULLY BE RESOLVED. BUT THIS IS PREDICATED ON TWO THINGS: (A) CONTINUED FIRMNESS ON THE PART OF THE GENEVA GROUP (DEVELOPED) NATIONS ON THE PRINCIPLE OF VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES, AND (B) FIRM PLEDGES FROM THESE SAME NATIONS TO SUPPORT THE PHL PROGRAM, WHICH WILL CONVINCE SAOUMA THAT HE NEED NOT RESORT TO HIS FINANCING SCHEME TO OBTAIN THE FUNDS FOR HIS PROGRAM. WE ARE PREPARED TO PLEDGE \$3 MILLION TO A VOLUNTARILY FUNDED PROGRAM PROVIDED OUR SHARE OF THE SUSPENSE ACCOUNT MONEY (\$2.5 MILLION) CAN BE RECLAIMED.

3. FRANCE HAS PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT TO THE PHL RESOLUTION UNDER CONSIDERATION THAT ADEQUATELY PROTECTS THE PRINCIPLE OF VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THE AMENDMENT CALLS FOR THE TRANSFER OF SUSPENSE ACCOUNT FUNDS TO THE PHL SPECIAL FUND "UNLESS SPECIFIC OBJECTIONS ARE LODGED BY MEMBER NATIONS FOR THE PORTION APPERTAINING TO SUCH MEMBER NATIONS AND NOTIFIED TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL BEFORE 31 JANUARY 1978," AND, AT THE SAME TIME, "URGES MEMBER NATIONS TO REFRAIN FROM AVAILING THEMSELVES OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED OPTION, IN ORDER THAT THE INITIAL CAPITAL IN THE FUND SHOULD REACH AN AMOUNT OF TEN MILLION DOLLARS."

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4. FOR BONN AND TOKYO: THE POSITIONS OF JAPAN AND THE FRG WILL BE CRUCIAL IN THE RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE. EMBASSIES ARE REQUESTED SOONEST TO CONVEY TO APPROPRIATE HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS OUR INTEREST IN THEIR

(A) SUPPORT OF THE FRENCH AMENDMENT TO THE PHL RESOLUTION, SINCE IT PRESERVES PRINCIPLE OF VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS; AND

(B) FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF AN ACCEPTABLY-FUNDED PHL PROGRAM. WE HOPE THAT BOTH THE FRG AND JAPAN WILL SHOW SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM, EITHER BY PLEDGING A SEPARATE CONTRIBUTION OR BY ACCEDING TO THE TRANSFER OF RESPECTIVE SUSPENSE ACCOUNT FUNDS, AND SO INFORM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL AS EARLY THIS WEEK AS POSSIBLE.

5. FYI OR IF ASKED: WHILE REF C INDICATED USG HOPE THAT FUNDS WOULD BE CHanneled VIA UNDP, THE IMPORTANT THING NOW IS FOR COUNTRIES LIKE JAPAN AND GERMANY, WHICH HAVE NOT ALREADY TAKEN PUBLIC POSITION OF SUPPORT, TO SHOW THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS WIDELY ACCEPTED, HIGH

PRIORITY ACTIVITY. VANCE

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